

News from Ed Markey

United States Congress

Massachusetts Seventh District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Colin Crowell

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(202) 225-2836

MARKEY WANTS SCHOOLS/LIBRARIES TO ESTABLISH POLICIES FOR ONLINE ACCESS BY CHILDREN TO INAPPROPRIATE INTERNET FARE

WASHINGTON, DC - U.S. Representative Edward J. Markey, (D-MA), Ranking Democrat on the House Telecommunications, Trade, and Consumer Protection Subcommittee today introduced legislation addressing the issue of children's potential to access to inappropriate online fare at schools and libraries.

"I believe that as schools and libraries establish "learning links" for schoolkids across the country, they must establish policies ahead of time regarding how they want to address access to indecent or inappropriate Internet Web sites by children," Markey said. "I believe that it is vitally important that before schools receive funding from the 'E-Rate' program, they should have some policy in place to shield kids from Web sites that are clearly of questionable educational content."

Representative Markey, who coined the term "E-Rate" - for "education rate" -- to describe the program enacted in the Telecommunications Act that gives schools and libraries, for the first time, discounted rates for telecommunications services. Mr. Markey successfully battled during consideration of the Telecommunications Act to include the "E-Rate" provision, an idea which built upon the nation's decades old policy of universal service, program that subsidizes local phone rates in inner city and rural America.

"Concern has been raised that children may access inappropriate or indecent Web sites on the Internet as schools and public libraries make computers with Internet access available through the E-Rate program," Markey continued. "I want to see schools take the steps they should take to protect kids. This legislation ensures that schools and libraries establish policies at the local level to address this concern before receiving E-Rate funding."